

## Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 BEIRUT 03752 061244Z  
ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 CCO-00 /026 W  
-----030947 061246Z /40

Z O 061210Z JUL 78

FM AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

TO SECSTATE WASHDC FLASH 8572

INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY CAIRO IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY LONDON IMMEDIATE

AMCONSUL JERUSALEM IMMEDIATE

USMISSION USUN NEW YORK IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L BEIRUT 3752

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PEPR, PINT, LE, SY

SUBJ: RESIGNATION OF PRESIDENT SARKIS

1. AMBASSADOR CALLED CHANCERY AT 1400 LOCAL TIME JULY 6. HE SAID HE HAD JUST COME FROM PRESIDENTIAL PALACE WHERE HE HAD MET WITH PRESIDENT SARKIS AND FOREIGN MINISTER BOUTROS. (AMBASSADOR CALLED AT THE PALACE AT HIS INITIATIVE AFTER RECEIVING TELEPHONE CALL FROM DANY CHAMOUN SAYING THAT SARKIS INTENDED TO RESIGN.) SARKIS INFORMED AMBASSADOR THAT HE HAD DEFINITELY DECIDED TO RESIGN. SARKIS SAID THAT HE IS IN THE MIDDLE AND HIS POSITION IS UNTENABLE; HE CANNOT BE WITH THE SYRIANS AGAINST THE CHRISTIANS AND HE CANNOT BE WITH THE CHRISTIANS AGAINST THE SYRIANS. AMBASSADOR TRIED HARD TO DISSUADE SARKIS FROM TAKING THIS STEP BUT SARKIS WAS DETERMINED. SARKIS REPEATED THAT HE HAD DEFINITELY DECIDED TO RESIGN AS SOON AS HE COULD GET IN TOUCH WITH THE SPEAKER OF THE PARLIAMENT, KAMAL AL-ASSAD, IN ORDER TO PRESENT HIM HIS  
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 BEIRUT 03752 061244Z

RESIGNATION.

2. AMBASSADOR DESCRIBED TO SARKIS AND BOUTROS APPROACH WE WERE PLANNING TO MAKE TO THE SYRIANS DESCRIBED IN STATE 170073 AND AGAIN URGED SARKIS NOT REPEAT NOT TO RESIGN UNTIL AFTER WE HAD HAD FURTHER OPPORTUNITY TO TRY TO WORK OUT A SOLUTION. SARKIS AND BOUTROS REPLIED THAT US APPROACH TO THE

SYRIANS WOULD NOT WORK, 1) BECAUSE ANY DIRECT US APPROACH TO THE SYRIANS ON THIS SUBJECT WOULD BE DEEPLY RESENTED, AND 2) BECAUSE NEITHER SYRIANS NOR CHRISTIAN MILITIAS WOULD AGREE. IT WAS UNREALISTIC, SARKIS AND BOUTROS SAID, TO TALK OF CHRISTIAN MILITIAS LEAVING ASHRAFIYAH BECAUSE THIS IS WHERE THEY LIVE. FURTHERMORE, CHRISTIANS WOULD NOT AGREE TO LAY DOWN THEIR ARMS UNTIL THE PALESTINIANS ARE ALSO DISARMED AND SARKIS AND BOUTROS WERE NOT AT ALL SURE THAT THEY SHOULD. SARKIS AND BOUTROS SAID THAT SYRIANS CONSIDER THE LEBANESE CHRISTIAN MILITIAS AS CRIMINALS AND WOULD NOT REPEAT NOT TREAT THEM AS EQUALS. THE SYRIANS SAY (AND SARKIS AND BOUTROS BELIEVE THEM) THAT THEY WILL STOP SHOOTING IF THE MILITIAS DO. HOWEVER, EVERY TIME THERE IS A LULL SOME UNDISCIPLINED MILITIA MAN LETS OFF A ROUND AND HE FIRING STARTS AGAIN.

3. COMMENT: LOCAL PHALANGIST RADIO ANNOUNCED AT 1400 LOCAL THAT PRESIDENT SARKIS INTENDS TO RESIGN AND THAT AMERICAN AMBASSADOR CALLED AT BAABDA IN AN ATTEMPT TO DISUADE HIM. FOLLOWING HIS DISCUSSION WITH SARKIS AND BOUTROS, AMBASSADOR HEARD FROM GOL UN AMBASSADOR TUENI THAT SARKIS HAD AGREED TO POSTPONE HIS RESIGNATION A FEW HOURS BUT AMBASSADOR DOUBTS THAT SARKIS WILL CHANGE HIS MIND. PARKER

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## Message Attributes

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**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Concepts:** PRESIDENT, DIPLOMATIC DISCUSSIONS, PERSONNEL RESIGNATIONS  
**Control Number:** n/a  
**Copy:** SINGLE  
**Draft Date:** 06 jul 1978  
**Decaption Date:** 20 Mar 2014  
**Decaption Note:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Action:** RELEASED  
**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
**Disposition Case Number:** n/a  
**Disposition Comment:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Date:** 20 Mar 2014  
**Disposition Event:**  
**Disposition History:** n/a  
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**SAS ID:** 2109793  
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**Status:** NATIVE  
**Subject:** RESIGNATION OF PRESIDENT SARKIS  
**TAGS:** PEPR, PINT, LE, SY, (SARKIS, ELIAS)  
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**Type:** TE  
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